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APPENDIX 1

COLORATION AND MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TURTLES

Hardshell turtles - two of same species (Asian leaf turtle)

Both individuals had 10 marginals on each side, serration at the posterior marginals starting from 7th till 10th; four on midback, 2 in front, 2 small behind. Hooked jaw, webbed feet, though digits free, five claws on forefeet, carapace flattened.

Bigger specimen - female (flat plastron)

Tail length - 2 cm. Carapace covered with moss and algae and a light cream brown colour with small black radiating lines on each scute.

Smaller specimen - male (concave plastron).

Tail length - 1.8 cm. Carapace brown, plastron, a dark rufous brown colour.

Softshell turtles - two of same species (Peacock softshell turtle)

Two of the same species, both juvenile, though one about twice the size of the smaller one. Aggressive, active, tries to bite, neck extensible, protrudes long neck. Coloration of both same. Four very prominent large eye spots on carapace. Eye spot - black circle surrounded by orange yellow ring, the outer circle around the yellow ring also black. Whole body mottled, blotched pattern of ochre yellow brown rectangular patches, stripes and spots, dark brown to black background. Circular carapace. Plastron greyish. Head with black reticulations and yellow patches. Five claws on digits on the hind feet. Left hindfoot length - 4 cm, left forefoot length - 3.2 cm (larger specimen).

19. FIRST RECORD OF THE SPOTTED FOREST GECKO *GECKOELLA COLLEGALENSIS* (BEDDOME, 1870) FROM GIR FOREST, GUJARAT STATE, INDIA

(With one text-figure)

On 8th November, 1996 at 18:05 hrs a brown coloured large spotted gecko was observed under stones, along with another lizard species *Mabuya macularia* and *Hemidactylus brookii*, at Pilhipat area of Gir forest, Sasan, Junagadh dist. On examination it was confirmed to be *Geckoella collegalensis*.

The measurements, colour and scales details are as follows: total body length 7 cm; snout to vent length 4 cm and tail 3 cm. Head moderate, snout larger, eyes large with vertical pupil, ear-opening small, oval. Tail shorter than the head and body length, and swollen at the base. Lateral fold absent. Digits clawed and

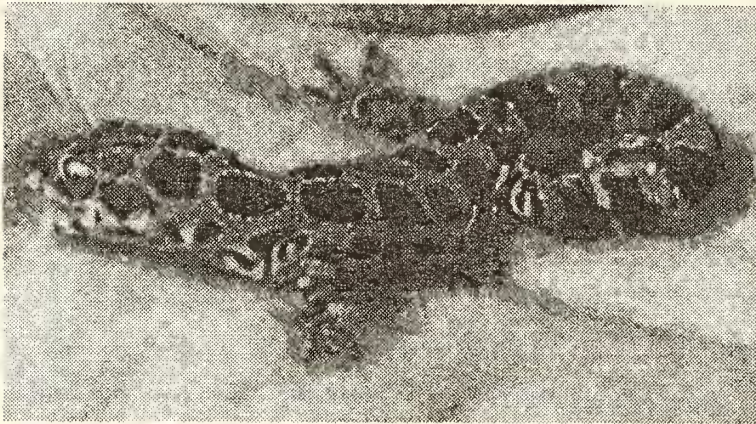


Fig. 1. Spotted forest Gecko *Geckoella collegalensis* from Gir Forest, Sasan

cylindrical, last two distal phalanges compressed and angularly bent. Hind limbs just reach the axilla (BNHS, Regn No. 1434).

Supra labials 12, lower labial 9, posterior labials smaller and granules near the jaw angle. A pair of large postmental scales. Enlarged dorsal tubercle absent, belly with rounded imbricate scales. Tail scales larger than the dorsal and belly scales.

Body colour light grey with large rounded black-edged brown spots from head to tail, in paired row, lateral spots are small. Limbs are dark brown, marbled markings. Lower jaw and throat white with brown dots. Belly white coloured and tail with dark brown bands.

According to Smith (FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA, 1935-1938, Vol. II) *G. collegalensis* is found on the hills of southern India and Sri Lanka at low elevations, while Sekar (*Hornbill* 1994 No. 4) reported from Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai, Maharashtra, the range extension of the species, upto the northern end of Western Ghats. The present record, a first report of *G. collegalensis* from Gir Forest, shows further range extension of this species.

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20. INANIMATE FEEDING BEHAVIOUR OF TUCKTOO *GECKO GECKO* LINN.

The tucktoo is the largest among geckos and the common house gecko of southeast Asia, found in India only in Bihar, Bengal and Assam (Daniel 1983). This lizard is, however, found in Mizoram in towns like Aizawl, Champhai, Serchhip, Kolasib, Vairangte, Lunglei and Lawngtlai. Mizos believe that the houses which harbour tucktoo, locally called as "ok..ok.." are lucky (Harit and Harit 1966). In Mizoram they are generally found in houses made of bamboo or Assam type houses made of asbestos tiles (Harit 1996). In concrete houses tucktoo is uncommon due to lack of hiding places. The literature on this gecko is meagre. McCann (1940) reported on its colouring, habitat and voice. Whitaker and Whitaker (1979) have described its breeding.

In the month of July 1997 I was discussing lizards with one of my friends. He told me that one midnight he heard a sound like *khat... khat...*

many times and when he got up he found that it was a tucktoo, holding one of the many plastic toy fish hanging on the wall of the sitting room, and battering it against the wall. The wall was a plywood partition of the sitting room. The toy fish was nearly 3 cm long and 1.5 cm in width, and all the toys were joined together by a strong thread. On seeing my friend the gecko left the toy fish and went to its hideout. Then he heard some sound from the water heater which he had forgotten to switch off when he went to sleep, as the electricity had gone off. The whole bucket of water had nearly evaporated due to the long time the water heater was inside. The water heater was switched off.

My friend concluded that it was the 'ok' that had saved them, otherwise there would have been an electric short circuit or fire, and hence they were lucky to have 'ok' in their house. Such is the faith of the Mizos.